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E.O. 11652: GDS TAGS: PINT PINS ID

SUBJECT: DEFENSE DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN ON DETAINEE POLICY

BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED

- 1. DURING MARCH 23 PRESS CONFERENCE DESCRIBING RESULTS OF 1975 MEETING OF ARMED FORCES LEADERSHIP HELD LAST WEEK, DEFENSE DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN BRIGGEN SUMRAHADI SAID PROBLEM OF DETAINEES HELD IN CONNECTION WITH SEPT 30, 1965 COMMUNIST COUP ATTEMPT (G30S/PKI) WAS DISCUSSED AT MEETING.
- 2. SUMRAHADI SAID GOVERNMENT AND PEOPLE HAVE RESPONSIBILITY TO SOLVE THIS "NATIONAL" PROBLEM IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE LAW, WHILE TAKING INTO ACCOUNT NEED FOR NATIONAL SECURITY. HE ADDED THAT SOLUTION TO PROBLEM ALSO REQUIRES GENUINE CONSIDERATION TOWARD PRISONERS WHO HAVE ACKNOWLEDGED THEIR WRONGDOING, AND THAT IN THE FUTURE, SUCH PRISONERS WOULD BE GIVEN OPPORTUNITY TO RETURN TO SOCIETY AND BECOME GOOD CITIZENS AGAIN.

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3. EMPHASIZING THE IMPORTANCE OF THE DETAINEE PROBLEM,

SUMRAHADI SAID THE SOLUTION MUST BE CARRIED OUT CAREFULLY AND ON STEP-BY-STEP BASIS IN ORDER TO AVOID TOO GREAT A RISK TO NATIIONAL LIFE. IN THIS RESPECT, HE SAID BOTH THE GOVERNMENT APPARATUS AND THE PEOPLE MUST INCREASE THEIR VIGILANCE TOWARD FORMER G30S/PKI DETAINEES WHO HAVE BEEN RELEASED.

4. IN AN EDITIRIAL COMMENTING ON SUMRAHADI'S STATE-MENT, THE PROTESTANT SINAR HARAPAN SAID MARCH 24 THAT "ALTHOUGH THE G30S/PKI INCIDENT OCCURRED ALMOST TEN YEARS AGO...IT ROCKED THE FOUNDATIONS OF SOCIETY AND INVOVED FUNDAMENTAL EMOTIONS AND CONFLICTS THAT ARE DEEP AND FAR REACHING, AND A LONG TIME WILL BE NEEDED TO RESTORE TOTAL PEACE AND CALM." "OTHER NATIONS HAVE NEVER KNOWN SUCH AN EXPERIENCE," THE EDITORIAL SAID. IT CONCLUDED BY PRAISING THE GENERAL PRICNIPLES SET FORTH AT THE ARMED FORCES MEETING FOR SOLVING YHE DETAINEE PROBLEM AND EXPRESSED HOPE THAT THE GOVERNMENT WOULD PREPARE "MORE DETAILED" PLANS AND "A CONCRETE TIME SCHEDULE" FOR RESOLVING THE PROBLEM.

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5. COMMENT: SUMRAHADI'S COMMENTS ARE RESTATEMENT OF GOI DETAINEE POLICY, I.E. DETAINEES WILL EITHER BE TRIED OR, IF THEY CHANGE THEIR ATTITUDES TO EXTENT THEY NO LONGER POSE THREAT TO SECURITY, RETURNED TO SOCIETY. SINAR HARAPN EDITOIRAL, WHILE ACKNOLEDGING UNIQUE HISTRRICAL NATURE OF DETAINEE PROBLEM AND NEED FOR MOE TIME TO SOLVE IT, IS GENTLE REMINDER THAT GOVERNMENT SHOULD MAKE MORE VIGOROUS EFFORT TO DEAL WITH IT.

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